Post-Deployment

The Center offers a Return & Reunion Program to help both the service member and his or her family adjust after a deployment. Family workshops are available to help families understand what to expect when the service member returns. Below are some suggestions to help reunite families:

- Couples should review their finances together. Be realistic concerning expenses that have occurred as a result of port visits, phone calls, and rising prices at home.

- Give children time to adjust to the parent returning home. Discuss discipline techniques with your spouse. If house routines change, such as meal times and bed times, talk with your spouse about the changes that are happening.

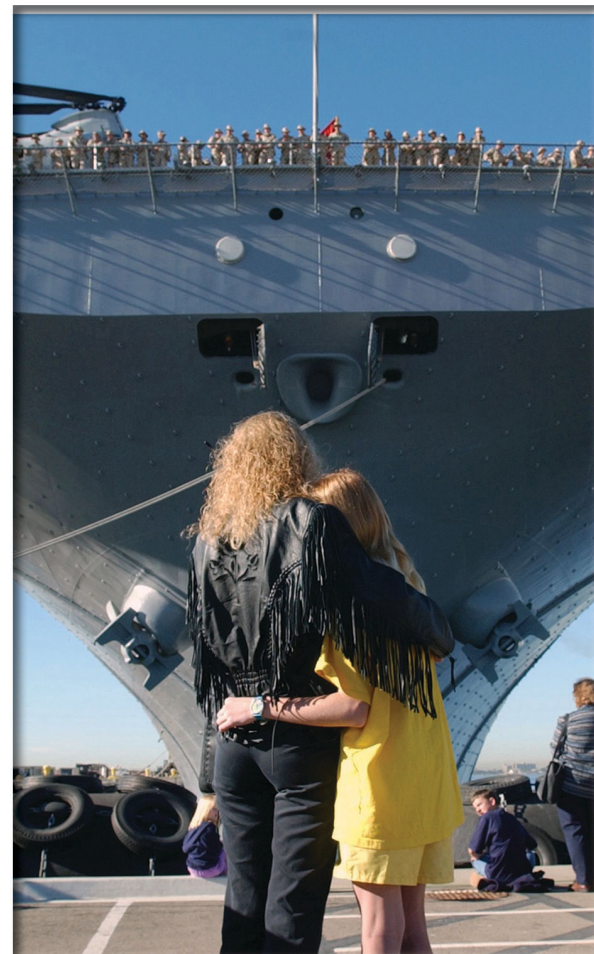For more information about the FFSC and programs like deployment support, please visit the FFSC Web site **www.persnet.navy.mil/pers66**. Or call The Center's 24-hour information and referral hotline at (800) FSC-LINE.

The Center
Fleet & Family Support

Meeting Your Needs. At Home. At Sea.

DEPLOYMENT SUPPORT

Managing Separation
TOGETHER

The Center
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57194

Managing Stress Together

Deployments…They're a way of life for military families, and one of the most difficult aspects of Navy life. The transition from complete family to single-parent family and back again is tough on sailors, spouses and children.

The Fleet and Family Support Center's Deployment Support Program is here to help single sailors and families understand and anticipate the physical and emotion- al demands associated with deployment. Through caring and professional support, The Center takes a proactive approach to identifying personal interests and potential problems, and then providing the tools that our global Navy family needs to suc- ceed. Deployment Support program goals are:

Education: Help sailors and families understand their Sailor's deployment assignment.
Prevention: Provide programs for service members and their families to help them understand the feelings they will undergo during deployment.
Assistance: Give financial, emotional and emergency support to families coping with separation.
Readiness: Keep service members and their families functioning well during all stages of deployment.

The Center provides pre-deployment, mid-deployment and post-deployment assistance to prepare Sailors and their families for short-term and long-term separation.

Pre-Deployment

How should I prepare my children for an upcoming deployment?
What types of legal issues should I be thinking about?
Is my family financially prepared?

Prior to deployment, many questions may arise. Thankfully, The Center is here to help with all of your deployment questions.

One of the best tools The Center offers is a pre-deployment checklist. It lists everything from financial preparation to medical information to emergency readiness.

Weeks before impending deployment, The Center and Chaplain Corps provide Sailors and their families information and education to help them deal with the emotional and spiritual needs of the family. They discuss topics such as social isolation and the importance of maintaining family structure while the service member is deployed.

Below is a list of ideas to help spouses and children prepare for a deployment.

• Assume role of disciplinarian before deployment to allow children time to adjust.
• Discuss household chores and let children choose the chores they would rather do.
• Become familiar with some of the excellent children's books that may be helpful during deployment. The Center maintains a list.
• Be honest about your feelings, and encourage children to express their own concerns and feelings.
• The entire family can work together to prepare a small package filled with family photographs, tapes, writing paper, paperback books, cookies, candy and any of the deploying parent's favorite things to be opened after the ship leaves.
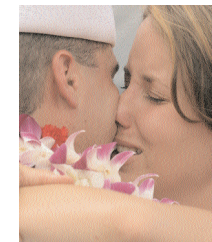
Mid-Deployment

During Deployment, The Center offers family members access to support groups, counseling, information and referral services and workshops to address issues of deployment. They provide a wide range of personal and family enrichment programs.

Topics include:

• Dealing with social isolation
• Continuing children's discipline and family structure while your spouse is deployed.
• Maintaining financial stability
• Understanding the impact of family readiness on Command readiness

A deployment can be emotionally challenging for those left behind, especially children. Although children's reactions will vary with their personalities, ages, and coping skills, deployment is a dramatic change that affects all children. Below is a list of ideas to help children cope with deployment.

• Reassure children of parental love, support and consistency. Keep the same routine and house rules during deployment.
• Give children a method for measuring the passage of time, i.e., crossing days off a calendar, paper chains, jelly beans in a jar, etc.
• Look for ways to keep deployed parent's presence in day-to-day family life. Have a good photograph of the deployed parent in children's bedrooms and on the refrigerator or kitchen bulletin board along with the deployed parent's postcards and letters.
• Talk about deployed parent as a regular part of daily conversation.

The importance of correspondence between a deployed Sailor and his/her loved ones is immeasurable. It may be the single most important morale factor during the time of separation. On most ships, Sailors have access to a telephone to call out. Family members can communicate via e-mail and through mailed letters and care packages.

The Center also supports the **Ombudsman Program** that provides a communication link between families and the command. An ombudsman is a spouse of one of Command's service members. Ombudsmen are volunteers personally selected by the Commanding officer.

If an emergency arises during deployment and families need imme- diate communication with their service member, the nearest **American Red Cross** Center can send AMCROSS messages to the Sailor. To ensure message delivery, the family member must provide the service member's Social Security number.